

House File 491 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 491

BY ROGERS and BERRY

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the replication of an employment-oriented
2 child support assistance pilot program in the state.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. RELIABLE EMPLOYMENT AND CHILD SUPPORT HELP
2 PROGRAM — REPLICATION AND ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS. The
3 department of human services shall replicate the program
4 initiated under the federal office of child support enforcement
5 national child support noncustodial parent employment
6 demonstration projects grant known as the reliable employment
7 and child support help (REACH) program, in a county in
8 northeast Iowa with a population of between 130,000 and 135,000
9 in the latest certified federal census which has a community
10 college located in the county seat. The program shall utilize
11 the community college and local workforce services to provide
12 employment-oriented services, responsible parenting classes,
13 case management, and enhanced child support services to
14 unemployed noncustodial parents who are behind or at risk
15 of becoming behind on their child support obligations. The
16 program shall provide outreach to ensure that any mother of
17 a child for whom paternity has not been legally established
18 and any father of a child for whom paternity has been legally
19 established is provided information about the program. The
20 department shall submit a progress report to the governor and
21 the general assembly by December 15, 2015, regarding program
22 outcomes.

EXPLANATION

24 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
25 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

26 This bill directs the department of human services (DHS)
27 to replicate the reliable employment and child support help
28 (REACH) program in a county in northeast Iowa with a population
29 of between 130,000 and 135,000 in the latest certified
30 federal census which has a community college located in the
31 county seat. The bill requires that the program utilize the
32 community college and local workforce services to provide
33 employment-oriented services, responsible parenting classes,
34 case management and enhanced child support services to
35 unemployed noncustodial parents who are behind or at risk of

1 becoming behind on their child support obligations. The bill
2 also requires the program to provide outreach to ensure that
3 any mother of a child for whom paternity has not been legally
4 established and any father of a child for whom paternity has
5 been legally established is provided information about the
6 program. DHS is directed to submit a progress report to
7 the governor and the general assembly by December 15, 2015,
8 regarding program outcomes.

9 The REACH program was initiated through a federal office of
10 child support enforcement national child support noncustodial
11 parent employment demonstration projects grant. The purpose
12 of the grant is to give child support enforcement programs
13 the ability to help noncustodial parents overcome employment
14 barriers, to help noncustodial parents strengthen relationships
15 with their children, and to help noncustodial parents pay
16 their child support consistently. The program was implemented
17 in Iowa in October 2013, and is located in the Des Moines
18 service region. Partners include the child support recovery
19 unit, the Iowa REACH team providing case management, Des
20 Moines area community college and the Evelyn K. Davis center
21 for working families providing employment services, visiting
22 nurse services of Iowa and dads with a purpose providing
23 fatherhood and parenting services, united way of central Iowa
24 providing financial literacy assistance, and the Iowa coalition
25 against domestic violence and visiting nurse services providing
26 domestic violence training and screening. The program's goal
27 is to enroll 1,500 noncustodial parents who are having trouble
28 meeting their child support obligations into the program in
29 a three-year period ending September 30, 2017. Some of the
30 criteria for eligibility to participate include having an
31 active child support recovery unit enforcement case, having
32 a court-ordered support obligation that is not currently
33 suspended, being medically able to work, and the payor having
34 paid up to 50 percent of the current support due in the last
35 three months or being unemployed, underemployed, or having

1 inconsistent employment, or having been released from prison
2 in the last six months. The incentives for participation in
3 the program include reinstatement of any sanctioned license,
4 bypassing the administrative levy for one year, expedited
5 review of modifications, satisfaction of state-owed arrears
6 when payments are made, and intense case management by child
7 support enforcement, job navigators, and fatherhood and
8 parenting providers.